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DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY
INSPECTION REPORT

To: D. Cargill, File
Inspector: J. Polayes-Wien/M. Turvey
Date of Visit: September 10, 1991
Inspection Report Prepared: September 18, 1991
Permit No.: N/A New Industry: ☐ Yes ☒ No
Permit Expires: N/A

Type of Inspection:

☐ Permit Application ☐ Complaint ☐ Announced
☐ Permit Renewal ☐ Enforcement ☒ Unannounced
☐ Permit Compliance ☒ Source Control

Facility: Boyer Alaska Barge Line Inc.
Address: 7318 Fourth Avenue S.
City: Seattle ZIP: 98108 County: King
Telephone: 763-8575
Person Contacted: Steve Sloan
Type of Facility: Tug and barge company
Receiving Water: Duwamish
Type of Treatment System: none

Complies with permit conditions: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

NARRATIVE: We planned this inspection because of a 1500 gallon oil spill which had occurred two days prior to our visit. On Monday, September 9, Paul O'Brien briefed me on the spill and what was being done to clean it up.

We arrived at the facility at 10:15 a.m. and asked to see Steve Sloan. We introduced ourselves to Mr. Sloan and explained that the purpose of our inspection was to find out about the spill and determine what could be done to contain any future spills, should they occur. We then proceeded to Mr. Sloan's office.

Mr. Sloan explained that Boyer Alaska is a tug and barge company which hauls various materials between Seattle and southeast Alaska. The spill was of a heavy petroleum material brought into the yard from Alaska three weeks ago. The material was to be pumped off by Red Sam Construction to use as a tack coat in making asphalt. Next spring, the tanks would be refilled and shipped to Alaska. There were twelve 3000 gallon tanks of this material stored in the yard at the time of the spill. Tanks of heavy petroleum or asphalt are stored in the yard up to three months.

Mr. Sloan said that their only permanent tank is a diesel fuel tank for forklifts. That tank is a 2000 gallon double-walled tank, or a tank within a tank.

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We asked if they have a SPCC plan for their petroleum storage. Mr. Sloan responded that they have an SPCC plan for their oil barge, but they don't have one in-house. He said that Northwest Enviroservice is doing the spill clean-up, and also cleans their oil barge and helps with paperwork.

Mr. Sloan said that they have a separate area for short-term storage of hazardous materials and empty hazardous material containers. He said that such materials are usually stored in shipping containers or approved tanks, which are loaded directly onto the barge. Also, the loading of any explosives is timed so that they are held only a few hours in the yard prior to loading. (I called the USGS on 10/2/91 and they are aware of explosives handling at Boyer and are present during loading).

We then walked into the yard. We asked if there are any storm drains or catch basins in the yard, and Mr. Sloan responded that there are no drains. He showed us the small trench which carries surface water runoff to the Duwamish. (Photo 1) He said that they would be putting in catch basins to comply with state and federal standards. Mr. Sloan also pointed out the hazardous material area. He said that the containers there were southbound empties. (Photo 2)

We then walked to the area where the tanks were stored. The tank that had leaked was tipped up to prevent further leakage. (Photo 4) The leak was caused by seam failure. The twelve tanks had been stored two high when the leak occurred, and the leaking tank was on the second tier. About 1500 gallons had leaked and the remainder had been pumped off. All twelve tanks were moved away from the original spill location to allow for clean-up. Sorbent pads were spread around the new tank storage area.

The area where the spill occurred was black with the heavy petroleum product. (Photo 3) Mr. Sloan said that the material was so thick that it didn't spread very far or sink more than a few inches into the soil. Northwest Enviroservice had pumped the liquid off the day before and put sorbent down. During our inspection they were in the process of digging up the sorbent along with the contaminated soil on site and along Second Avenue, where the spill had spread. (Photo 6)

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Mr. Sloan indicated that the asphalt product is always stored in the same general area, and is stored there up to three months. The storage area is sloped toward Second Avenue. Diesel and light distillates are never stored more than one week, and usually are stored about two days prior to loading.

We then walked out of the gate along Second Avenue to see if there are any catch basins on that street near the site. We did not see any catch basins in the immediate vicinity.

Mr. Sloan then showed us their warehouse/transfer station. The building housed a variety of cargo awaiting shipment, ranging from sofas to canned food.

We then returned to the office. Mr. Sloan said that a consultant, Jay Spearman whose office is in Kirkland, is working on drainage plans for the facility. An SPCC plan is supposed to be developed by the engineering firm as well. He said that they have an oil spill contingency plan for their barges filed with the State of Alaska. He also said that they generate 400 to 500 gallons per year of waste lube oil from barges.

We said that the yard drainage plans should include a berm for the oil and hazardous material storage area. We said that they were lucky this time since the material that spilled was very thick so that it did not spread far, but if a less viscous product had spilled the consequences could have been much more serious. Mr. Sloan said that we could contact Jay Spearman to make sure our concerns are addressed. He said that construction of the new drainage system may start within six months, at the same time they will be adding to their warehouse.

We departed at 11:10 a.m..

Joanne Polayes-Wien
Joanne Polayes-Wien, Inspector
Elliott Bay Action Team

Addendum: I spoke with Jay Spearman on September 19, 1991, regarding his firm's drainage work for Boyer Alaska Barge. Mr. Spearman said that they were in their initial stages of work and have no design on paper yet. He said that they would be applying for an NPDES stormwater permit, a general yard drainage permit for their new outfall, and a City of Seattle shoreline permit. He said that obtaining a shoreline permit is about a nine month process once they

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apply, and that they would be submitting the application in about a month. The timing of construction would depend on how long it takes to obtain the permits.

I indicated that the oil and hazardous materials storage areas should be bermed. Also the drainage from those areas should be segregated from the rest of the yard drainage and should not be allowed to discharge directly to the Duwamish. Mr. Spearman acknowledged my concerns and said that they haven't figured out how they are going to deal with the drainage yet.

I asked about preparation of an SPCC plan, and Mr. Spearman responded that he didn't think one was necessary because the containers at Boyer Alaska are in transit. I responded that they are stored there three months at a time and are over the size threshold where an SPCC plan is required. He said that it had been a while since he had prepared an SPCC plan and would review the regulations.

Mr. Spearman then asked whether Ecology wanted Boyer Alaska to implement any short term measures, since it would be a while before construction is completed. He said they could work on a BMP plan. I said that BMP's are important, but that some additional interim measures to contain potential spills may also be needed. I said that I would discuss the issue with my supervisor and get back to him.

I spoke with Bill Longston of EPA on October 18, 1991, and he confirmed that storage tanks held on site for up to three months are not considered in transit and that an SPCC plan is required for 3000-gallon tanks.